



ANNUAL REPORT 2008



YEAR IN REVIEW

- Honorable Susan D. Huguenor

As the Chair of the Commission on Children, Youth and Families, I am proud to share with you the work and accomplishments of the Commission for the year.*

Commission members, joined by a cross-section of government, education, nonprofit agencies, and community members, worked diligently to improve services for children and families living in San Diego County. A few highlights of the year include:

THE COMMISSION DISTRIBUTED 17,500 PIECES OF PREVENTION AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS THROUGHOUT SAN DIEGO COUNTY AND PROVIDED TRAINING AND EDUCATION TO OVER 2,000 PARENTS, PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS, CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

🌸 In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, the Commission hosted over 250 community members at the STARS Breakfast where nine individuals and organizations received STARS Awards for their dedication to the prevention of child abuse.

🌸 “Laying the Foundation for a Safe Start,” a two day conference was held in March 2008 with 500 attendees. This was a collaborative effort of the San Diego County Commission on Children, Youth and Families, National Safe Start Initiative, Child Welfare Services, San Diego Domestic Violence Council, the Office of Violence Prevention, and First 5 San Diego.

🌸 The Commission’s Fairness and Equity Committee expanded its work to address the overrepresentation of African American and Indian children in the child welfare system by supporting Child Welfare Services participation in the California Disproportionality project.

While we are pleased with our accomplishments, there is still more work to be done. With the leadership of the Board of Supervisors, and our 2008-2010 focus areas of education, juvenile justice and child abuse prevention, we will continue our efforts to support children and families.

Thank you to all of the individuals and organizations who contributed to the success of the Commission.

** The Commission decided to transition from a calendar year reporting period to a fiscal year reporting period. Therefore, this is the transition year report and includes an 18-month period from January 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.*

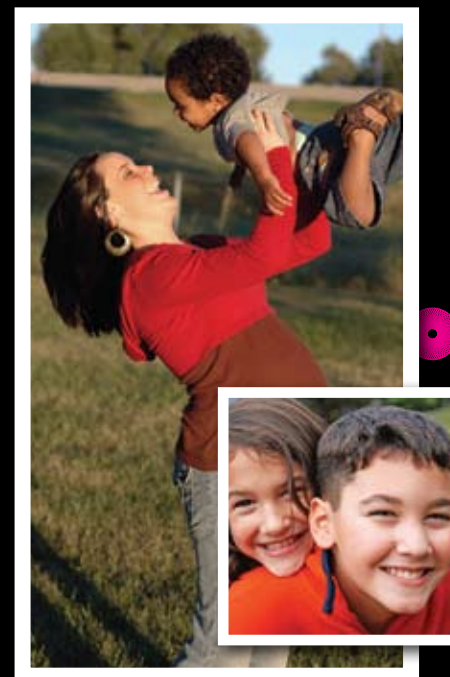


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MEMBERSHIP

The Commission has a membership of 42 individuals: five members at-large, four Board-designated members, 16 public officials, eight nonprofit or non-governmental organizations, six regional collaborative representatives and three consumers. Specifically, the Commission consists of following voting members:

Honorable Susan Huguenor, <i>Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court (Chair)</i>	Terry Grier, Ed.D., <i>Superintendent, San Diego Unified School District</i>	Mary Baum, <i>Representative, North Central Region Collaborative</i>
Supervisor Greg Cox, <i>Board of Supervisors</i>	Emerald Randolph, Ed.D., <i>Representative, Supervisorial District One</i>	Donald Stump, <i>Representative, North Coastal Region Collaborative</i>
Bill Kolender, <i>Sheriff</i>	JoAnne Bushby, <i>Representative, Supervisorial District Two</i>	Magarita Holguin, <i>Representative, South Region Collaborative</i>
Bonnie Dumanis, <i>District Attorney</i>	Jeanette Day, <i>Representative, Supervisorial District Three</i>	Donna Ewing Marto, <i>Consumer Representative</i>
Mack Jenkins, <i>Chief Probation Officer</i>	Margarita de Ruyter, <i>Representative, Supervisorial District Four</i>	Daphyne Watson, <i>Consumer Representative</i>
Nick Macchione, MS, MPH, FACHE, <i>Director, Health and Human Services Agency</i>	Katherine Smith-Brooks, <i>Representative, Supervisorial District Five</i>	Vacant, <i>Consumer Representative</i>
Wilma Wooten, M.D., MPH, <i>Public Health Officer, Health and Human Services Agency</i>	Michelle Soltero, <i>Chair, San Diego County Child Care and Development Planning Council</i>	Vacant, <i>Representative, North Inland Region Collaborative</i>
Alfredo Aguirre, <i>Director, Mental Health Services, Health and Human Services Agency</i>	Sandra McBrayer, <i>CEO, Children's Initiative</i>	Vacant, <i>Superintendent, School District — Unspecified</i>
Mary Harris, LCSW, <i>Director, Child Welfare Services, Health and Human Services Agency</i>	Honorable Susan Golding, <i>CEO, Child Abuse Prevention Foundation</i>	
Laura Spiegel, <i>Executive Director, First 5 Commission San Diego</i>	Sharon Lawrence, <i>Executive Director, Voices for Children</i>	
John Sansone, <i>County Counsel</i>	Carlos Flores, <i>Executive Director, San Diego Regional Center</i>	
Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D., <i>Chancellor, San Diego Community College District</i>	Margaret Iwanaga-Penrose, <i>President/CEO, Union of Pan Asian Communities</i>	
Randolph Ward, Ed.D., <i>County Superintendent of Schools</i>	Vivian Reznik, M.D., MPH, <i>Representative, American Academy of Pediatrics</i>	
Barbara Ryan, <i>San Diego County School Boards Association</i>	Rev. Nancy Mitchell, <i>Representative, Faith Community</i>	
Catherine Lichterman, <i>Director, County of San Diego Department of Housing and Community Development</i>	Walter Philips, <i>Representative, San Diego Association of Nonprofits</i>	
Renée Bahl, <i>Director, County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department</i>	Paula Guerra, Ph.D., <i>Representative, Central Region Collaborative</i>	
Ana España, <i>Representative, Office of the Public Defender</i>	Meredith Riffel, <i>Representative, East Region Collaborative</i>	

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Honorable Susan Huguenor, <i>Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court (Chair)</i>
Mack Jenkins, <i>Chief Probation Officer</i>
Mary Harris, LCSW, <i>Director, Child Welfare Services, Health and Human Services Agency</i>
Lynn Ceresino Neault, <i>Community College District</i>
Barbara Ryan, <i>San Diego County School Boards Association</i>
JoAnne Bushby, <i>Representative, Supervisorial District Two</i>
Vivian Reznik, M.D., MPH, <i>Representative, American Academy of Pediatrics</i>
Tonya Torosian, MSW, CFRE, <i>Executive Director, Commission on Children, Youth and Families</i>

COMMISSION MISSION, VISION, FOCUS

OVERVIEW The Commission on Children, Youth and Families (Commission) was formed by the Board of Supervisors in 1986, with a mandate to provide a leadership role in identifying and addressing the needs of children, youth and families who are either at-risk or in the public charge.

In February 2002, the Board of Supervisors designated the Commission as the local child abuse prevention council. The Commission is a cross-agency and cross-sector resource, as well as a public forum, for policy, programmatic and funding issues related to children, youth and families. The Commission advises both the Board of Supervisors as well as the Chief Administrative Officer.



COMMISSION MISSION

Advise the Board of Supervisors on policy affecting the well being of children, youth and families.

VISION Through advocacy and leadership, each San Diego child will reach his/her full potential, by growing up in a family, school and community that is safe, healthy and nurturing.

FOCUS Strive to integrate the child serving system by building strong partnerships with shared accountability to improve outcomes for children and youth.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Commission's accomplishments are the results of the hard work of many community volunteers and dedicated professionals who serve on one of its five standing committees. The current committees of the Commission are:

Joint Domestic Violence Council & Child Abuse Prevention Steering Committee

JOINT EDUCATION AND FOSTER YOUTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Partnership Committee Executive Committee FAIRNESS & EQUITY COMMITTEE

THE COMMISSION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- 2,204 people received training related to child abuse prevention this year.
- Continued Safe4Baby campaign to decrease the number of infant deaths in San Diego County.
- Honored 19 community members with STARS Awards for their outstanding service to the prevention of child abuse during April, Child Abuse Prevention Month (2007 and 2008).
- Published the Five-Year San Diego County Child Fatality Report.
- The Tutor Connection Program was recognized by the California State Association of Counties for populations over 700,000 as a Challenge Awards Merit recipient.
- The Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter Partnership Foundation selected the Tutor Connection Program as an award finalist.
- California State University San Marcos recognized the Tutor Connection Program as an exemplary Community Service Learning Program.
- Twenty-five students in group home care were able to participate in A Reason to Survive (ARTS), a therapeutic arts enrichment program.
- A seven-member team participated in the annual Foster Care Education Summit to address identified gaps in our community and reduce gaps to academic barriers.
- College Connection Program increased student participation by over 37%.
- The number of foster youth matched to a mentor increased by 33%.
- Reached out to the African American and Native American communities providing an opportunity to discuss systemic problems in working with the child welfare system and possible solutions.
- Established Family Finding Services, with 60 youth actively participating in the program, to reconnect with family members and permanency planning to reduce the disproportionality or children of color.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

One of the roles of the Commission is to support community education about and awareness of children and family related issues. To fulfill this role, the Commission sponsors or hosts numerous trainings and conferences annually. In 2007-2008, more than 2,000 public safety officers, child welfare professionals and other community members were trained as part of this outreach. Some of these opportunities included:

- 2,000 public safety officers, child welfare professionals and other community members were trained as part of this outreach. Some of these opportunities included:

- Children's System of Care Conference (2007 and 2008).

- San Diego Family Law Council presented "Guiding the Lives of Children of Divorce and Separation" to more than 150 attendees.

- The two-day 2007 Child Abuse Prevention Conference hosted more than 300 parents and professionals.

The Commission PROMOTES PREVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS for children, youth and families.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONTINUED)

- Partnered with the Office of Violence Prevention, National Safe Start Initiative, Child Welfare Services, San Diego Domestic Violence Council, First 5 Commission of San Diego to provide annual Safe Start Conferences attended by 800 professionals (2007 and 2008).

- Completed the Sunset Review of the Commission in 2007.

- Partnership Committee took the lead on San Diego's Raising the Bar initiative.

- Partnered with Alliant University and United Way San Diego to provide a Shaken Baby Prevention training at the 2007 IVAT Conference. This training highlighted the Period of Purple Crying program.

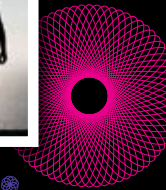
- Diversity Schoolhouse continued to be a success, training more than 400 professionals.

- Participated in: National Roundtable on Education and Foster Care; Data Quality Campaign Quarterly Issue Meeting; Ready to Learn Conference; Blueprint for Success Conference; USD University Consortium; CCESSA/CSBE/PTA Conference Community Collaborative; Annual Foster Care Education Summit.





The Steering Committee's Mission is to prevent
and respond to child maltreatment and family violence
by COORDINATING COMMUNITY EFFORTS and PROMOTING
AWARENESS, ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION.

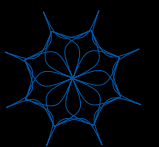


CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL

In February 2002, the Board of Supervisors designated the Commission as the local Child Abuse Prevention Council. The Child Abuse Prevention Council has specific mandates outlined in State Welfare and Institutions Code 18982:

THE COMMISSION COMPLETES ITS OBLIGATIONS AND DUTIES AS THE LOCAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL THROUGH ITS JOINT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION STEERING COMMITTEE (STEERING COMMITTEE) AND ITS ACTIVITIES.

- To provide a forum for interagency cooperation and coordination in the prevention, detection, treatment, and legal processing of child abuse cases.
- To promote public awareness of the abuse and neglect of children and the resources available for intervention and treatment.
- To encourage and facilitate training of professionals in the detection, treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- To recommend improvements in services to families and victims.
- To encourage and facilitate community support for child abuse and neglect programs.



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

The Joint Domestic Violence Council & Child Abuse Prevention Steering Committee (Steering Committee), provides leadership, resource development, education & coordination to protect children from exposure to violence, abuse or neglect. The Steering Committee provides a forum for inter-agency coordination in the prevention, detection, and treatment of child abuse, and promotes public awareness of the abuse and neglect of children.

The Steering Committee spearheads activities in recognition of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month awarding STARS Awards to individuals making a positive impact on the prevention of child abuse in San Diego County. The 2008 awardees were:

TALIN YESAIE,
Family Service Coordinator, Mental Health Services, Inc.

HONORABLE DESIREE BRUCE- LYLE,
Judge, Truancy Court

DENNIS LEGGETT,
SPSW, HHSA- Child Welfare Services

CASEY GWINN, J.D.,
CEO, YWCA of San Diego County and President of the National Family Justice Center Alliance

WESLEY DAVENPORT,
Youth Advisor-LEAP

LAURA CARTER,
Public Health Nurse, San Diego County

LYNDA SPARKS,
Foster Mother

CHRISTOPHER DAVIS,
Detective, San Diego Sheriff's Department Child Abuse Unit

NEIGHBORHOODS FOR KIDS,
East Region



CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCIL (CONTINUED)

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CONSORTIUM: The Consortium subcommittee plans a monthly training series for frontline workers within the social services, law enforcement and education fields to improve knowledge and skills in a variety of issues related to child welfare. The Consortium alternates training topics between child welfare related topics and Diversity Schoolhouse, which provides communication with and understanding of various ethnic, cultural, religious and other diverse groups in our community. Diversity Schoolhouse trainings are provided in conjunction with the Union of Pan Asian Communities.

CHILD FATALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE: This committee reviews on a monthly basis children and youth deaths that come to the attention of the Office of the Medical Examiner. The purpose of the review is for coordination among those systems or agencies providing services or investigating reports of child endangerment. The San Diego County Child Fatality Report is published by this Committee with complied data, findings and recommendations to reduce the number of child fatalities.

FAR SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION: This group is a coalition to prevent child abuse by coordinating efforts, leveraging resources, and raising awareness. The Commission is an active participant in this coalition sponsored by the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention.

Committee Chairs:
Dawn Griffin, Ph.D., Domestic Violence Council
Debbie Comstock, Little House Family Services
Donna Ewing Marto, Family and Youth Roundtable





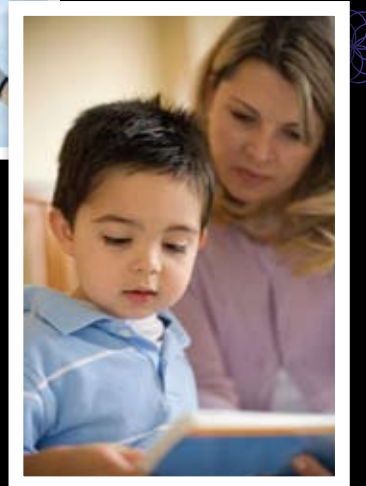
EDUCATION AND FOSTER YOUTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Education Committee provides oversight, support and coordination of programs and policies that improve educational outcomes for youth within the dependency and delinquency systems. For efficiency and to reduce duplication of efforts the Committee is combined with the San Diego County Office of Education, Foster Youth Services Advisory Committee (FYSAC).

San Diego County's state-of-the art data information system, Foster Youth Student Information System (FY-SIS), continues to serve as a model for the State of California, and San Diego serves as a mentor in cross-system collaboration and direct-serve provision in closing the achievement gap for students in foster care.

THE STUART FOUNDATION PROVIDED A THREE-YEAR GRANT TO INSTITUTE THE SCHOOL SUCCESS PROJECT, WHICH WILL PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL LIAISONS TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE.

*Committee Chairs:
Honorable Susan Huguenor, Juvenile Court
Barbara Ryan, San Diego County
School Boards Association*



HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Housing Committee was organized to focus on the development of policies and programs that ensure the housing needs of children and families are met and that they receive sustainable support. The State of California legislature made positive changes in 2006 to the THP-Plus program, including removing the County funding match requirement. The THP-Plus program provides affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services for up to 24 months to help former foster youth ages 18-24 make a successful transition from out of home care to independent living. The County issued a request for information for potential providers in November 2006 and awarded THP-Plus contracts in early 2008. This increased capacity by 144 beds in San Diego County and many youth that did not have housing support are now being served.

IN RECENT YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN INCREASED COLLABORATION AMONG TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS PROVIDERS. THIS HAS IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR FOSTER YOUTH TRANSITIONING INTO ADULthood.

In May 2008, the Committee determined it had achieved many of its goals and the Committee was concluded. The Commission continues to support housing initiatives in San Diego County by participating in a number of other collaborative efforts. Thank you to all who served on the Housing Committee for their dedication to the needs of children and families.



PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

The purpose of the San Diego County Partnership for Children, Youth, Families and Communities (Partnership Committee) is to promote coordinated and collaborative efforts of public and private sector organizations engaged in services to children.

In 2004, the San Diego Child Welfare Services Redesign Steering Committee was formed to translate the California Child Welfare Redesign vision to local practice. The ensuing report envisioned a flexible local collaborative to ensure every county has broadly based partnerships to promote and support the capacity of families to keep their children safe, create a stable family environment and promote positive outcomes.

The committee's child welfare focus needed to be broadened to embrace parallel efforts for system change happening within juvenile justice, violence prevention, education and mental health. The Partnership Committee was created and embodies the new direction, inviting child serving systems and community members including families and youth to unite in a public/private partnership of shared goals and accountability.

THE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

- Collaboration and coordination among and between public and private organizations
- Input and shared responsibility of all members to improve public programs and policy
- Communities are supports to families and families are key to children's success
- Economic vitality is essential to build strong communities
- Families and youth as partners
- Cultural competency in program design, service provision and public policy recommendations

Committee Chair:

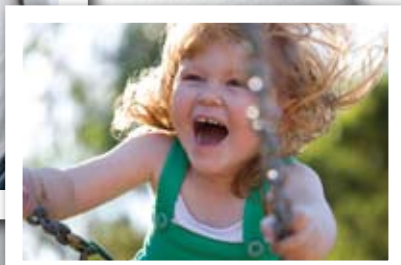
Walter Philips, San Diego Youth and Community Services





“Albert and Alesha are African-American siblings who have been in foster care since 1999. Since then they have experienced several placement changes and have had limited contact with extended family members. Through Family Finding Services, the maternal grandmother who lived out-of-state was contacted, and through a planned engagement process,

Albert and Alesha are having regular contact with their grandmother. These services have facilitated regular and meaningful contact with other family members including other aunts, uncles, paternal and maternal grandparents and their mother.”



FAIRNESS AND EQUITY COMMITTEE

The Fairness and Equity Committee was formed in January 2005 to examine the issue of the overrepresentation of persons of color in child serving systems. During a strategic planning process in the early stages of this workgroup, members outline key focus areas for their work.

CENTRAL REGION PILOT: In 2007 the Central Regional Pilot was launched by Child Welfare Services to address disproportionality in the Central Region of San Diego County. In 2007, the County of San Diego Child Welfare Services contracted with a provider to implement family identification, search and engagement services for relatives and /or significant others for children in foster care. This innovative contract, which employs the best available search technology and family engagement methods, offers opportunities for youth to re-connect with family members and for permanency planning for foster youth. A resource that explores permanency options, Family Finding Services can also be a tool for reducing disproportionality by specifically targeting children of color.

To date 60 youth are actively participating in engagement services.

THE DISPROPORTIONALITY PROJECT: One of the activities of the Fairness and Equity Committee was to support Child Welfare Services in their application to the California Disproportionality Project to address disproportionality issues for African American and Native American children. This is a statewide initiative sponsored by Casey Family Programs, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the California Department of Social Services. The project goal is to improve child welfare practice in addressing the disproportionate representation of youth of color. The Project will be a key initiative in moving forward the work of the Fairness and Equity Committee over the next two years.

Committee Chairs:

Daphyne Watson, Mental Health Systems, Inc.

Jorge Cabrera, Casey Family Programs



FISCAL PLANNING & OVERSIGHT

The Commission is designated by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to oversee the money in the Children's Trust Fund. The Trust Fund revenue is a portion of the fees collected from birth certificates. Additional funding is from specialized license plates and Community Based Family Resource Funding. Money in the Trust Fund is to be used for child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention programs operated by non-profits or public institutions of higher learning with expertise in child welfare. Additionally the County funds the Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council from the Children's Trust Fund.

BACKGROUND The Commission is the designated advisory body for planning the State funded Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT), the federally funded Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) programs. Effective with the three-year funding cycle 2005-2008, the State required counties to submit a combined CAPIT, CBCAP and PSSF Plan and Application. The Commission, as the designated advisory body for these funding streams, developed and received Board approval to submit the Plan and Application on September 20, 2005.

The Plan highlighted the new service delivery model, Community Services for Families (CSF), which began September 1, 2004. The primary focus of this model is to provide a continuum of child welfare support services to assist at-risk families by providing safe and stable homes for their children. County staff is now able to make referrals to one lead agency in each of the six service regions for home visiting, parent education, kinship support and family preservation and support services. This results in families getting the timely services they need, delivered in a culturally sensitive manner. The Commission is responsible for monitoring contract outcomes and recommending changes if necessary.

**The Commission promotes
PREVENTION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS
for children, youth and families.**

In November 2007, the Commission staff completed the CAPIT/CBCAP annual update report for State FY 06-07 and submitted it to the State. The annual update describes San Diego's progress toward achieving the goals described in the previous CAPIT/Community Based Family Resource and Support Programs Plan for 2005-2008.

THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BEGAN FY 2007-2008 WITH A BALANCE OF \$4,611,977. THE TOTAL AMOUNT ALLOCATED FOR USE IN THAT FISCAL YEAR WAS \$ 2,199,809.

The Welfare and Institutions Code requires the Trust Fund to be used to fund programs that prevent or ameliorate the effects of child abuse. The Board approved the Commission's recommendation to use the Children's Trust Fund as an additional financial resource for the Community Services for Families contracts.



CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND (CONTINUED)

INTERAGENCY CHILDREN'S SERVICES (SB 997) For purposes of compliance with the Welfare and Institutions Code, Chapter 12.8, Section 18986, the Commission is designated as the SB 997 Interagency Children and Youth Services Council. This legislation charges the Commission to support development of a comprehensive delivery system for local services provided to children and youth. This responsibility is the cornerstone of the Commission's mission and ongoing committee work. The Partnership Committee provides a new platform for the Commission to fulfill this mandate.

SIGNS OF SUPPORT PROGRAM The Commission Executive Committee provided administrative oversight to the Signs of Support Program, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors in November 1997. This program raised money by selling advertising on selected County vehicles. In July 2007 the program ended with the Commission allocating the FY 2006-07 remaining Signs of Support funds in the amount of \$8,671 to San Diego County Parks and Recreation Society for Childhood Obesity Initiative "Prescription for Fitness Pilot Project."

LOOKING AHEAD

The Commission will continue to promote coordinated and collaborative efforts of public and private sector organizations engaged in services to children and facilitate a regional and integrated service delivery approach to the provision of children, youth and family services. The Commission Focus areas for 2008-2010 are Juvenile Justice, Education and Child Abuse Prevention.

STAFF

Tonya Torosian, Executive Director
Harold Randolph, Analyst
Vicki Devine, Administrative Secretary

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